# Public Service Commission

## Statement of Mandate

## 2014 – 2015

*Inspired, client-focused professionals delivering innovative HR programs to advance employee engagement and the work of the Nova Scotia public service.*

NOVA SCOTIA

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# Message from the Minister and Commissioner

A strong public service is essential for delivering the programs and services that Nova Scotians expect and deserve. Strong economic development, support for health and education programming and many other provincial priorities depend on having knowledgeable and skilled public servants to develop and deliver programs that provide the greatest benefit to Nova Scotia families.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) is committed to creating a dedicated and diverse public service by providing excellent support to departments and employees alike through human resource (HR) policies, programs, service and standards. In the year ahead, the Public Service Commission will focus on key initiatives such as the development of strategies to support corporate employee engagement, diversity and social equity, and the recruitment and retention of youth in the public service. We will work to improve online HR support and enhance training and career development to ensure our employees have the skills and learning they need to help government departments and agencies meet their objectives. We will also continue to refine our organizational structure and business processes at the PSC, and complete a five-year strategic plan, both of which will support our newly created vision. It is our desire to provide inspired leadership, be smart with our resources, and celebrate and recognize our dedicated team.

We are confident in the Commission's ability to deliver on its plan outlined in this Statement of Mandate for 2014-2015. We also want to acknowledge and thank the PSC employees and public servants who provide high-quality programs and services to Nova Scotia families, communities and businesses each and every day.

*Original signed by*

The Honourable Labi Kousoulis
Minister, Public Service Commission

*Original signed by*

Laura Lee Langley
Commissioner, Public Service Commission

## Mandate

To ensure that the Nova Scotia Government has the human resources required to create and deliver high-quality programs and services to citizens. The PSC is responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating human resource policies, programs, services and standards. The PSC is responsible for ensuring high-quality corporate human resource management principles, values and practices. The PSC is the government's agent for collective bargaining for direct government employees.

## Vision

Inspired, client-focused professionals delivering innovative human resource programs to advance employee engagement and the work of the Nova Scotia public service

## Mission

To provide expert, respected human resources advice, services and solutions.

# Supporting Government's Priorities

The core priorities of government are:

1. Consumer-focused energy solutions, including a regulated, competitive energy market.
2. Prosperous businesses of all sizes – creating jobs across the province.
3. Responsible fiscal management.
4. Investing in student success with a renewed and strengthened education system.
5. Accessible, responsive healthcare.
6. Helping all Nova Scotians meet their fullest potential by supporting vulnerable communities – seniors, disabled.

As an internal service provider to government departments and agencies, the role of the PSC is to ensure that the Nova Scotia Government has the human resources required to create and deliver excellent programs and services to the public.

Based on this, the PSC is continuing to work towards two main outcomes:

- An engaged, productive workforce to support government's priority goals.
- Improved service delivery through accountability and engagement.

The PSC supports government's priorities by creating the environment for an engaged workforce and by delivering superior human resource related programs and services to government departments. These programs and services are responsive to the needs of our clients and assist departments in recruiting, developing and retaining an engaged, productive public service. We strive to provide timely responses; consistent, efficient, transactional service and information; and effective consultative and advisory solutions in safe respectful work environments.

# PSC's Strategic Objectives

Based on our mandate, the PSC has identified the following four objectives that link our vision and mission to government's priorities and our performance measures:

- To create an efficient, high-performing, competent and engaged public service that is responsive to employees, client departments and the public.
- To adopt superior HR management principles, values and practices.
- To develop, implement, and evaluate effective policies, programs, services and standards.
- To provide effective collective bargaining advice and services to direct employees of government.

The following are key strategic initiatives for 2014-2015 based on each objective:

## *To create an efficient, high-performing, competent and engaged public service that is responsive to employees, client departments and the public.*

**Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is a key focus of government. In support of the focused attention upon employee engagement, during 2014-2015, the PSC, in collaboration with key stakeholders, will begin the development of a Corporate Employee Engagement Strategy. Some of the objectives for this strategy will be to identify systemic barriers to engagement across the public service and work to address them in the context of engagement, and allow for knowledge exchange in order to build the government's engagement capacity. The goal is to improve conditions for attracting and engaging employees by having a better understanding of the corporate issues and their impact on employees, and through enhanced support for engagement.

In 2014-2015, the PSC's Senior Leadership Council (SLC), i.e. the Executive Team and Directors, will focus their engagement efforts internally and work collaboratively with the departmental Employee Engagement Committee to implement the Committee's recommendations as identified in their December 2012 Employee Engagement Plan. The SLC will focus on the main engagement drivers identified in the PSC's "How's Work Going?" employee survey results, such as improving and enhancing internal communications.

**Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**

In 2013-2014, the PSC began the development of a Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in collaboration with the Human Resource Policy and Programs Working Group of the Diversity and Social Equity Steering Committee. The strategy is based on a process of research, engagement and analysis that took place in 2013 with the objective to help support the government's commitment to being a workforce that is inclusive, culturally competent, free of discrimination, values diversity and is representative, at all levels, of the population it serves.

During 2014-2015, the PSC will continue work to finalize the strategy and develop ways to communicate it and implement its recommendations. This will help enable the public service to have more focused

consideration of the value of diversity and all of its contributions to improved decision-making and, ultimately, better service to the public.

**Employee Development Programs**

Employee development is one of the key drivers of engagement. In 2014-2015, the PSC will continue to grow and enhance employee development programs that support talent and succession management and enhance our abilities to attract, retain and build the capacity of our "early career" employees.

Initiatives that we will be focusing on in 2014-2015 will help respond to recommendations from GoverNEXT (an internal network of employees) and will include: an enhanced new employee orientation program that will include: online and classroom content delivery; a mentorship program that will connect early career employees with mentors to help guide their development; a renewed focus on career management lead by a dedicated Career Development Specialist, who will provide career support services; and leadership development programs that incorporate 360-degree assessments and modules focused on coaching, team leadership and employee engagement.

## *To adopt superior HR management principles, values and practices.*

**Absence Management**

The level of support and care offered to an employee before, during and after an absence has a direct impact on engagement. The PSC is reviewing absence management practices and processes in order to improve support for managers and employees and improve absence tracking. Benefits of these improvements will include: consistency in absence management processes; enhanced capacity and service levels; greater support and assistance for ill or injured employees; reduced costs associated with absenteeism; and increased employee productivity and engagement.

In 2014-2015, the PSC will review Government's Absence Management processes, and develop an integrated Absence Management model that will incorporate all workplace health and disability programs, including prevention, wellness, attendance, early intervention, health and safety initiatives, claim management, recovery resources and return to work.

## *To develop, implement, and evaluate effective policies, programs, services and standards.*

**PSC's Organizational Restructuring and Process Improvement**

In 2014-2015, the PSC will complete the implementation of our organizational restructuring, including implementing earlier process improvement recommendations and exploring further opportunities for continuous process improvement.

**Review of Corporate HR Policies**

To keep pace with an ever-changing environment, it is important to ensure policies and supporting procedures are current and maintained on a regular basis. In 2014-2015, the PSC will begin work on reviewing the existing corporate HR policies located in the Management Manual 500, conduct a gap assessment with input from staff and clients, and then develop a plan to ensure corporate HR polices

are current and relevant. The result of this work will be vital as the PSC moves forward and begins to revise existing policies and develop new ones.

**HR Service Delivery Excellence Project (Knowledgebase)**

The HR Service Delivery Excellence Project (Knowledgebase) is a PSC initiative that aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of human resource service delivery across government. The goal of the project is to provide a single point of contact for employees and managers to obtain quick and consistent answers to routine human resource questions and issues, while ensuring responsive support is available when they need it. Benefits include employees being in more direct control of their employment experience and quickly resolving routine issues with the support of HR, and HR will benefit from having increased resource flexibility allowing them to complete complex activities more efficiently and effectively.

## *To provide effective collective bargaining advice and services to direct employees of government.*

**Employee Relations**

In 2014-2015, the PSC will prepare for and commence negotiations for the next round of bargaining as NSGEU Civil Service, Crown Attorney, and Highway Worker agreements expire during this fiscal year.

By focusing on key areas aligned with PSC's objectives, we are able to streamline initiatives, improve productivity, strengthen how we deliver essential programs and services, and operate in the most sustainable ways possible. This will enable us to meet the needs of our clients and stakeholders with more timely responses; consistent, efficient transactional services; and effective consultative and advisory solutions in safe respectful work environments. Ultimately, by attaining these objectives we will succeed in achieving our stated outcomes of ensuring an engaged productive workforce to support government's priorities and improving service delivery through accountability and engagement.

# Budget Context

| Public Service Commission | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2013-2014 Estimate | 2013-2014 Forecast | 2014-2015 Estimate |
| **Program & Service Area** | **($thousands)** | **($thousands)** | **($thousands)** |
| **Gross Departmental Expenses** | | | |
| Client Service Delivery | 10,691.0 | 9,983.7 | 10,320.0 |
| Employee Relations | 700.0 | 899.5 | 875.0 |
| Office of the Commissioner | 653.0 | 745.9 | 650.0 |
| Public Service Renewal Office | 0 | 0 | 156.0 |
| Strategy & System Performance | 5,225.0 | 5,913.5 | 6,189.0 |
| **Total Gross Departmental Expenses:** | **17,269.0** | **17,542.6** | **18,190.0** |
| **Additional Information:** | | | |
| **Fees and Other Charges** | | | |
| **Ordinary Recoveries** | **-5** | **-170.9** | **-76.0** |
| **TCA Purchase Requirements** | | | |
| **Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)** | **199.2** | **183.1** | **198.2** |

## Performance Measures

***To ensure that the Nova Scotia Government has the human resources required to create and deliver high-quality programs and services to citizens.***

| OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate) | MEASURE / RATIONALE | DATA Base Year | TARGET (2014-2015) | TRENDS (Inter-jurisdictional average)[1] | Strategic Actions to achieve target[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engaged, productive workforce to support government's priority goals | Level of Employee Engagement ("How's Work Going?" Biennial Employee Survey)<br><br>*Computed as an average percentage of favourable responses to 6 questions related to:*<br>• *Organizational Satisfaction*<br>• *Organizational Commitment* | 67% (Employee Survey 2006, Corporate) | ***Corporate:*** Maintain as an area of strength[3]<br><br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):*** Score above jurisdictional average by 2% | ***Corporate***:<br>2007 – 72% (63%)<br>2009 – 74% (67%)<br>2011 – 62% (66%)<br>2013 – 60% (66%) | ***Corporate-focused Strategic Actions:***<br>• Prepare for and commence negotiations for the next round of bargaining as collective agreements expire during this fiscal year.<br>• Develop Corporate Employee Engagement Strategy (PSC Lead) in collaboration with the other stakeholders.<br>• Communicate the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and implement its recommendations.<br>• Improve PSC's approach to strategic planning and measurement. This will include: client satisfaction survey; PSC Scorecard; and HR Dashboard.<br>• Create employee development programs that support talent and succession management and enhance our ability to attract, retain and build the capacity of our "early career" employees. Initiatives include: an enhanced employee orientation program; a new mentorship |
| | | 83% (Employee Survey 2007, PSC) | ***PSC:*** Increase to an area of strength<br><br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):*** Score above corporate average by 5% | ***PSC (Department)***:<br>2007 – 83%<br>2009 – 81%<br>2011 – 60%<br>2013 – 52% | |

[1] *The percentages in brackets represent the Canadian Inter-jurisdictional averages (Source: Employee Engagement Inter-jurisdictional Team).*

[2] *A distinction has been made between corporate focused strategic actions that will impact corporate targets and those strategic actions that will impact internal to the PSC targets.*

[3] *Agreement scores of 60-74% are categorized as areas of strength, those 75% or above are categorized as areas of clear strength as defined by the Employee Engagement Inter-jurisdictional Team.*

| OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate) | MEASURE / RATIONALE | DATA Base Year | TARGET (2014-2015) | TRENDS (Inter-jurisdictional average)[1] | Strategic Actions to achieve target[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engaged, productive workforce to support government's priority goals | Talent Capacity Index ("How's Work Going?" Biennial Employee Survey)<br><br>*Average based on agreement scores for questions relating to:*<br>• *Opportunities for Career Growth & Advancement*<br>• *Learning & Development Opportunities* | 52% (Employee Survey 2011, Corporate) | ***Corporate:*** Increase to be within area of strength range<br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):*** Score above jurisdictional average by 2% | ***Corporate:***<br>2009 – 64% (57%)<br>2011 – 58% (56%)<br>2013 – 48% (56%) | program; a dedicated Career Development Specialist; and enhanced leadership development programs and tools.<br><br>***Departmental PSC-focused Strategic Actions:***<br>• The Senior Leadership Council will work collaboratively with the PSC's Employee Engagement Committee to implement their recommendations as they relate to the engagement drivers from the PSC's 2013 "How's Work Going?" employee survey results, e.g. improving internal PSC communications. |
| | | 58% (Employee Survey 2011, PSC) | ***PSC:*** Increase to be within area of strength range<br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):*** Score above corporate average by 5% | ***PSC (Department):***<br>2011 – 58%<br>2013 – 40% | |
| | Workplace Culture Initiatives Index ("How's Work Going?" Biennial Employee Survey)<br><br>*Average based on agreement scores for questions relating to:*<br>• *Recognition*<br>• *Employee Involvement & Innovation*<br>• *Quality Work Life*<br>• *Co-worker Relationships* | 61% (Employee Survey 2011, Corporate) | ***Corporate:*** Maintain as an area of strength<br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016)*** Score above jurisdictional average by 2% | ***Corporate:***<br>2009 – 72% (68%)<br>2011 – 61% (66%)<br>2013 – 60% (67%) | |
| | | 66% (Employee Survey 2011, PSC) | ***PSC:*** Maintain as an area of strength<br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):*** Score above corporate average by 5% | ***PSC (Department):***<br>2011 – 66%<br>2013 – 64% | |

| OUTCOME (immediate or inter-mediate) | MEASURE / RATIONALE | DATA Base Year | TARGET (2014-2015) | TRENDS (Inter-jurisdictional average)[1] | Strategic Actions to achieve target[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Improved service delivery through accountability and engagement | Percentage of program areas that scored 60% or above for client's satisfaction with the amount of time it took to get the service they required. | 36% (Client Satisfaction Survey, 2011) | Increase to 50%<br><br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):***[4] Increase to be within area of strength range | TBD | ***Corporate-focused Strategic Actions:***<br>• Review Government's Absence Management processes and develop an integrated Absence Management model that will incorporate all workplace health and disability programs, including prevention, wellness, attendance, early intervention, health and safety initiatives, claim management, recovery resources and return to work.<br>• Develop access to online HR support and information to improve service delivery.<br>• Review corporate HR policies (Management Manual 500), conduct a gap assessment, and then develop a plan to ensure corporate HR policies are current and relevant.<br><br>***Departmental PSC-focused Strategic Actions:***<br>• Complete the implementation of the PSC's organizational restructuring, including implementing earlier process improvement recommendations and exploring further opportunities for continuous process improvement.<br>• In response to the Auditor General's report (January 2014), the PSC will review its records management practices. |
| | Percentage of program areas that scored 60% or above for clients who feel PSC employees are knowledgeable and competent. | 71% (Client Satisfaction Survey, 2011) | Increase to 75%<br><br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):*** To maintain as an area of strength | TBD | |
| | Average percentage of clients satisfied with the overall quality of service they received from the PSC. | 54% (Client Satisfaction Survey, 2011) | Increase to 60%<br><br>***Ultimate Target (2015-2016):*** Increase to be within area of strength range | TBD | |

[4] *As measured on the PSC Client Satisfaction Survey, agreement scores of 60-74% are categorized as areas of strength, those 75% or above are categorized as areas of clear strength as determined by the Employee Engagement Inter-jurisdictional Team.*